

Army Focus

Future Combat Systems

The Army is undertaking a transformation into a more responsive, deployable, and sustainable force, while maintaining high levels of lethality, survivability, and versatility. In unveiling this new strategy, GEN Eric Shinseki, Chief of Staff of the Army, stated, “Heavy forces must be more strategically deployable and more agile with a smaller logistical footprint, and light forces must be more lethal, survivable, and tactically mobile.”

This new force is called the **Objective Force (OF)**, and is intended to meet the full spectrum of present and future Army missions. The cornerstone of the OF capability and the transformation is the **Future Combat Systems (FCS)** Program. This reconfigurable, adaptive *system of systems* will provide a common baseline capability that increases the Army’s ability to conduct network/collaboration-centric warfare. The Army is working to develop and demonstrate the first generation of FCS, and all its enabling technologies, within this decade. This transformation has had, and will continue to have, a major impact on the entire Army Science and Technology enterprise — to include the SBIR Program. Since 2000, the SBIR Program has been aligned with FCS and OF technology categories — this will be an ongoing process as OF/FCS needs change and evolve.



Information

SBIR Program Management Office

Director

U.S. Army Research Office–Washington
ATTN: AMSRL-RO-WA, Room 8N31
5001 Eisenhower Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22333-0001

Phone: (703) 617-7425

Fax: (703) 617-8274

E-Mail: aro-sbir@hqamc.army.mil

Website: www.aro.army.mil/arrowash/rt/



United States Army



Small Business Innovation Research Program (SBIR)



Overview



Congress established the SBIR Program in 1982 in response to growing concerns in the 1970s and 1980s about the underrepresentation of U.S. small businesses in Federal R&D.

The Army reserves 2.5% of its extramural R&D budget, meaning that part of the R&D budget that goes “out of house”, for competitively selected SBIR awards to small businesses. The goal of the dual-use SBIR Program is to tap into the innovation and creativity of small businesses to help meet Army R&D objectives. As an added incentive, these small companies develop technologies, products, and services that can be commercialized through sales in the private sector or back to the government. The Army chooses its research topics and the recipients of SBIR funding through a rigorous selection process which ensures that only the most qualified firms receive funding in areas which will benefit the Army, small businesses, and the private sector.



Approach

Successful SBIR research efforts move through three phases:

Phase I - Feasibility Study

Army scientists and engineers develop SBIR solicitation topics that address current and anticipated warfighting technology needs. Topics are reviewed by the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Battle Labs, the Army logistics community, and senior officials from the Army and Department of Defense. Small businesses enter the SBIR process by submitting Phase I proposals against these topics and then prove the feasibility of their concepts in six months using SBIR funds of up to \$70,000. Option funding of up to \$50,000 is available for interim Phase I – Phase II activities if the project is selected to receive a Phase II award. The SBIR Program is quite competitive, with approximately one in ten Phase I proposals being funded.

Phase II - Development

Successful Phase I efforts may result in Phase II contracts to fund research, development, and prototype production. Phase II is a substantial R&D effort, up to \$730,000 over two years, and is intended to result in a dual-use technology, product, or service. Additionally, the Army SBIR Program has established the Phase II Plus Initiative to facilitate the rapid transition of SBIR technologies, products, and services into DoD acquisition programs. Under Phase II Plus, the Army provides matching SBIR funds (up to \$250,000) and allows the extension of an existing Phase II effort for up to one year to perform additional research and development.

Phase III - Commercialization

Phase III, the commercialization phase, is the goal of every SBIR effort. In Phase III, the successful company markets its dual-use product or service either to the government, the private sector, or both. No SBIR funding is provided in Phase III.

Each potential SBIR initiative is assessed from the Phase III perspective: Will the project's results influence the quality of military materiel or yield a valuable commercial product? What is the potential commercial market for this innovation?

The Army participates with the Navy, Air Force, and six other DoD agencies under the overall DoD SBIR Program; however, the Army program is autonomously managed and seeks to support Army-specific goals within the framework of the DoD SBIR Program.

